Each node has the following Technical Specifications.

PSTN Compatibility:

Primary Rate ISDN:

T1: Robbed bit signalling

Framing: D4, ESF

Coding: AMI, B8ZS

ISDN Support: Q.920, Q.921, Q.922, Q.930, Q.931

LAN Interface:

Ethernet 10/100 Base-T

Protocols TCP/IP (Internet), IPX, Netbuei

Data Protocols:

300 to 33,600 bps full duplex

56,000 bps receive/33,500 bps send

V.34bis, V.34, V.32bis, V.32, V.22bis, V.22

Fax Protocols:

Group 3 up to 9.6 kbs

V.29, V.17, V.27ter, T.30

Telephony Support:

DTMF/MF

Voice Support:

WAV, VOX, GSM

Video Support:

MPEG

AVI

H323

Module:

Keyboard and Monitor Ports

Operating Environment:

Operating Temperature: 0 to 45° C., internal ambient

Storage Temperature: –10 to 70° C.

Regulatory Compliance:

PUL/UL Canada

UK Oftel

FCC Certified Class A

The present invention has been described above purely by way of example, and modifications can be made within the spirit of the invention. The invention also consists in any individual features described or implicit herein or shown or implicit in the drawings or any combination of such features or any generalization of any such features or combination.

What is claimed is:

1. A unified messaging system, comprising a plurality of nodes and network means for interconnecting said plurality of nodes for distributed operation, each node comprising means for receiving, storing and transmitting data, characterized in that an In-box having a predetermined logical location is reserved for each user, and data intended for a particular user is stored at the node at which it is received together with information indicating the logical location of the In-box of the user for which the data is intended, wherein said data comprises messages of different format types and a particular subset of said format types can be retrieved at one or more other nodes in the system and all data bearing said predetermined logical location information is accessed using a particular communication access type when said user's In-box is accessed.

2. A messaging system according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said nodes includes means for changing the format of said data.

3. A messaging system according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein at least one of said nodes has a plurality of input/output connections.

4. A messaging system according to claim 3, wherein one of said input/output connections is an external telephone connection and another of said input/output connections is an external network connection.

5. A messaging system according to claim 1, wherein said data is one or more of a voicemail message, fax message, e-mail message, web response message, phone answering message, short message service (SMS) message, notification message, system message, video-mail message, white board message.

6. A messaging system according to claim 1, wherein the system is arranged to provide a menu indicating data bearing said predetermined logical location information when a user's respective In-box is accessed.

7. A messaging system according to claim 6, wherein said menu is a voice menu.

8. A messaging system according to claim 6, wherein said menu is displayed on a screen.

9. A messaging system according to claim 2, wherein at least one of said plurality of nodes includes means for converting text data into speech data.

10. A messaging system according to claim 2, wherein at least one of said plurality of nodes includes character recognition means.

11. A messaging system according to claim 1, arranged wherein data is retrieved from a first node and transmitted to a second node when said first node receives a signal from said second node.

12. A messaging system according to claim 1, arranged wherein data is transmitted from a first node to a second node at a predetermined time set by the system.

13. A messaging system according to claim 1, wherein said nodes are interconnected by means of an Internet-based network.

14. A messaging system according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said plurality of nodes comprises means for diverting incoming data to another one of said plurality of nodes.

15. A messaging system according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said plurality of nodes comprises user-activated means for diverting incoming data to another one of said plurality of nodes.

16. A messaging system according to claim 1, wherein data intended for a particular user is stored directly at the node at which it is received.

17. A unified messaging system, comprising a plurality of nodes and network means for interconnecting said plurality of nodes for distributed operation, each node comprising means for receiving, storing and transmitting data, characterized in that an In-box having a predetermined logical location is reserved for each user, and data intended for a particular user is stored at the node at which it is received together with information indicating the logical location of the In-box of the user for which the data is intended, wherein said data comprises messages of different format types and a particular subset of said format types can be retrieved at one or more other nodes in the system and all data bearing said predetermined logical location information is accessed using a particular communication access type when said user's In-box is accessed, wherein said nodes are interconnected by means of an Internet-based network.

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